



SAFETY MONDAY

August 20, 2012

Injuries Also Occur in the Office

It may not look as dangerous as the back of a garbage truck, welding, an assembly line, or a landfill, but many work-related injuries occur in the office. These injuries, usually referred to as “ergonomic,” “carpal tunnel” or “repetitive stress,” can be debilitating for employees and costly for employers.

Increased use of computers is causing increased eye, neck and wrist injuries associated with repetitive office tasks. Proper workstation design and work practices can reduce the frequency and severity of these injuries. For example, the office chair, computer monitor and keyboard should be adjusted to fit the worker. Because computer users spend most of their day sitting, it is critical for the chair to be comfortable (and a comfortable employee is usually a more productive employee). The monitor should be directly in front of the user to reduce neck strain.

A critical item is the mouse. It is essential to: (1) rest your arm on a hard surface while using the mouse; (2) use a mouse pad; (3) don’t grip the mouse tightly; (4) let go of the mouse when possible; (5) choose a mouse that fits your hand.

There is lots of information available on the internet and elsewhere on reducing ergonomic injuries in the office. These injuries may not be as “high profile” as those suffered by drivers and helpers, but they hurt just the same and have a negative impact on productivity and morale.

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